

1 WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

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3 1. A method for reducing the damaging effect of a hypochlorite salt-containing
4 solution on a soft fabric article, comprising the steps of:

5 (a) modifying the solution by adding an alkali metal hydroxide to the
6 solution, such that the weight concentration ratio of the alkali metal hydroxide over the
7 hypochlorite salt in the modified solution is no less than 1:12.5; and

8 (b) contacting the modified solution with a stain on the soft fabric article for
9 at least one minute to remove the stain.
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11 2. The method according to claim 1, wherein the alkali metal hydroxide is sodium
12 hydroxide, and the hypochlorite salt is sodium hypochlorite.
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14 3. The method according to claim 2, wherein the weight concentration ratio of
15 sodium hydroxide over sodium hypochlorite in the modified solution is no less than 1:10.
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17 4. The method according to claim 2, wherein the weight concentration ratio of
18 sodium hydroxide over sodium hypochlorite in the modified solution is no less than 1:5.
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20 5. The method according to claim 2, wherein the weight concentration ratio of
21 sodium hydroxide over sodium hypochlorite in the modified solution is no less than 1:2.5.
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23 6. The method according to claim 2, wherein the weight concentration ratio of
24 sodium hydroxide over sodium hypochlorite in the modified solution is no less than 1:1.
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26 7. The method according to claim 2, wherein the modified solution includes at least
27 0.2 weight percent of sodium hydroxide.
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29 8. The method according to claim 2, wherein the modified solution includes at least
30 0.3 weight percent of sodium hydroxide.
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1 9. The method according to claim 2, wherein the modified solution includes from
2 about 0.5 to about 3 weight percent of sodium hydroxide.

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4 10. The method according to claim 1, comprising the step of contacting the modified
5 solution with the stain on the soft fabric article for at least five minutes to remove the stain.

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7 11. The method according to claim 1, comprising the step of contacting the modified
8 solution with the stain on the soft fabric article for at least fifteen minutes to remove the stain.

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10 12. The method according to claim 1, wherein the stain is a menstrual fluid stain or
11 an underarm perspiration stain.

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13 13. The method according to claim 1, wherein the soft fabric article comprises
14 cotton.

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16 14. A method for reducing the damaging effect of a hypochlorite salt-containing
17 solution on a soft fabric article, comprising the steps of:

18 (a) modifying the solution by adding an alkali metal hydroxide to the
19 solution, such that the pH of the modified solution is at least 11.8; and

20 (b) contacting the modified solution with a stain on the soft fabric article for
21 at least one minute to remove the stain.

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23 15. The method according to claim 14, wherein the pH of the modified solution is at
24 least 12.

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26 16. The method according to claim 14, wherein the pH of the modified solution is at
27 least 12.5.

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29 17. The method according to claim 14, wherein the pH of the modified solution is
30 about 13.

1 18. The method according to claim 14, comprising the step of contacting the
2 modified solution with the stain on the soft fabric article for at least five minutes to remove
3 the stain.

4
5 19. The method according to claim 14, comprising the step of contacting the
6 modified solution with the stain on the soft fabric article for at least fifteen minutes to remove
7 the stain.

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9 20. The method according to claim 14, wherein the alkali metal hydroxide is
10 sodium hydroxide, and the hypochlorite salt is sodium hypochlorite.

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12 21. The method according to claim 20, wherein the modified solution comprises at
13 least 0.5 weight percent of sodium hypochlorite.

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15 22. The method according to claim 20, wherein the modified solution comprises at
16 least 1 weight percent of sodium hypochlorite.

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18 23. The method according to claim 20, wherein the modified solution comprises at
19 least 2 weight percent of sodium hypochlorite.

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21 24. The method according to claim 20, wherein the modified solution comprises at
22 least 5 weight percent of sodium hypochlorite.

23
24 25. A kit useful for removing a stain from a soft fabric article, said kit
25 comprising:

26 a cleaning composition which comprises an effective amount of a hypochlorite salt
27 and an alkali metal hydroxide, the weight concentration ratio of the alkali metal hydroxide
28 over the hypochlorite salt being no less than 1:12.5; and

29 an instruction for removing said stain from said soft fabric article employing said
30 cleaning composition.

26. The kit according to claim 25, wherein the alkali metal hydroxide is sodium hydroxide, and the hypochlorite salt is sodium hypochlorite.

27. The kit according to claim 26, wherein the weight concentration ratio of sodium hydroxide over sodium hypochlorite is no less than 1:10.

28. The kit according to claim 26, wherein the weight concentration ratio of sodium hydroxide over sodium hypochlorite is no less than 1:5.

29. The kit according to claim 26, wherein the weight concentration ratio of sodium hydroxide over sodium hypochlorite is no less than 1:2.5.

30. The kit according to claim 26, wherein the weight concentration ratio of sodium hydroxide over sodium hypochlorite is no less than 1:1.

31. A kit useful for removing a stain from a soft fabric article, said kit comprising:
a first compartment which includes a sodium hypochlorite solution;
a second compartment which includes a sodium hydroxide solution; and
an instruction for removing said stain from said soft fabric article employing said kit.